

Draft 9/03

# Pesticide Safety Information

CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PESTICIDE REGULATION  
1001 I Street,  
Sacramento,  
California 95814

## Rules for Medical Care When Handlers Use Organophosphates and Carbamates

If you mix, load, or apply organophosphate or carbamate pesticides, you might need extra medical care.



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### THESE ARE SOME OF THE PESTICIDES THAT THESE SPECIAL RULES APPLY TO

Organophosphates	Carbamates
Acephate, Address	Aldicarb, Temik
Azinphos-methyl, Guthion	Carbaryl, Sevin, Adios!
Chlorpyrifos, Dursban, Lorsban, Dual Use Cyren	Furadan
DEF, Folex	Lannate
Diazinon	Vydate
Dimethoate, Defend Cygon	Thiodicarb
Malathion	
Monitor	
Supracide	
Pennacp	
Naled	
Imidan	

**The farmer must arrange for you to get special medical care if all three of these things are true for you**

1. You mix, load, or apply organophosphate or carbamate pesticides *and*
2. You use these pesticides for more than 6 days in a 30-day period *and*
3. The label of the pesticide you use has the word “**DANGER**” or “**WARNING**” on it

### WHAT IS THIS EXTRA MEDICAL CARE?

You must have special blood tests so the doctor can tell if the pesticides are hurting your body. This may be happening even if you don't feel sick. The blood tests measure cholinesterase, a chemical in your body which helps your nerves work right.

**Handle means to mix, load, or apply pesticides; repair or clean equipment that was used for pesticides; or touch unrinsed pesticide containers.**

Organophosphates and carbamates can keep cholinesterase from working. You must have the blood tests to make sure that you don't get sick while mixing or applying these pesticides. Having blood tests to check your cholinesterase must be part of your job's safety program.

### **WHEN DO I GET THE BLOOD TESTS?**

The first step is having a blood test before you work with the pesticides. This blood test should be taken when you have not worked with organophosphates and carbamates for at least 30 days. This first blood test will find out what your normal cholinesterase level is. Every employee who mixes, loads or applies organophosphates or carbamates on a regular basis must have this blood test.

### **WHERE DO I GO TO GET THE BLOOD TESTS?**

The farmer must arrange with a doctor for you to have the blood tests and he must pay for the tests. The farmer must post the doctor's name, address, and phone number where you can see it.

### **HOW OFTEN DO I NEED A BLOOD TEST?**

**If you are a new employee and you regularly handle these pesticides, you must**

- be tested at the end of each 30-day period for the first 3 months
- then be tested every 60 days, or as recommended by the doctor.

Even if you don't handle pesticides every day, the blood tests must still be done if you do all three things on the front page of this sheet. After you have had the blood test several times, the doctor may change how often you are tested.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF MY BLOOD TESTS SHOW I HAVE A PROBLEM?**

If your blood tests show your cholinesterase is low, it means that there are problems where you work. The farmer must find out how you are being exposed to the pesticide.

### **Then the farmer must fix the problems**

- If there is equipment that is not working right, the farmer must fix it.
- The farmer must make sure that you are working safely. You might need to change how you work with the pesticides.
- The farmer must also stop you from working with these pesticides before you become very sick. You cannot work with these kinds of pesticides until your blood tests show your body is getting better. It is okay for you to do other work or handle other pesticides during this time. You and the farmer must follow the instructions from the doctor. Only the doctor can explain what your blood tests mean.

### **HOW DO I FIND OUT WHAT MY BLOOD TEST SHOWS?**

The farmer must keep the records of your blood test results and the doctor's advice for three years. He must let you look at these records if you want to.



If you don't get all the information you need in your training, or from your boss, you should call your County Agricultural Commissioner, or the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) for more information. You can find the Commissioner's number in your local white pages phone directory. DPR numbers are:

- Anaheim (714) 279-7690
- Fresno (559) 445-5401
- Sacramento (916) 324-4100